

AMERICAN LEGATION, BEIRUT

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January 22, 1951

Review of the Local Arabic Press
Appearing on January 21, 1951.

BEIRUT (Editor: Muhyiddin Ksuli, Sunni-Moslems, opposition)

regards the current meeting of the Arab League Political Committee as one of the most decisive meetings in the history of the League and in indeed in modern history because the Arabs are called upon frankly to express their views on the existing struggle between the Western and the Eastern blocs. The paper then wonders whether the Arab leaders will this time carefully study and compare things in order to reach a decision which will safeguard long-range Arab interests; or they will differ and listen to those who uphold neutrality "which is a myth" or to those who believe that the conclusion of a non-aggression treaty with the Soviet Union will safeguard the future of the Arabs and realize their aspirations for independence, liberty and human dignity. The paper observes "We have seen the powers that have been compelled to revolve in the Soviet sphere suffer from pain, overcome by need and poverty and ordered and obeying the orders like slaves." It then continues:

"We have said more than once that not all the promises the Western powers have given the Arabs following the first and the second world wars have been fulfilled and that the attitude of the Western powers toward the Palestine question has been inconsistent with the principles of justice, particularly after one million Arabs have been rendered homeless and after the Jews have taken over Palestine, but we must not forget also the position the Soviet Union has assumed toward this question and how the Kremlin recognized the State of Israel and supported it just as our Allies supported it. However, there are principles which are connected with the cause of our existence and which bind us to the Western democracies. We could reach understanding with them if we knew how to negotiate and if we proved that we were a solid force which could, if it wanted, follow the procession of civilization and contribute its share in defending liberties and human dignity.."

In reporting Mr. Pinkerton's visit to Fu'ad Azzam at the Foreign Office Saturday morning, the paper says that Mr. Pinkerton refused to make any statement to the press following the meeting and that Fu'ad Azzam described the visit as an ordinary one during which no political subjects were discussed. However, it claims that its "correspondent writes that Mr. Pinkerton brought to Fu'ad Azzam certain explanations which the Lebanese government had previously requested in connection with the aid America could give Lebanon's program."

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AL-HAYAT (Editor: Kamil Kurwana, Shia-Muslim, independent)

publishes in its editorial space an article contributed by a "leading writer experienced in Arab affairs." The writer says that the present session of the Arab League Political Committee is highly important because the delegates of the Arab states have not, since the first armistice decision, been called upon to take a fundamental decision as the present one for which they are now meeting. The writer then discusses the geographical and political position of the Arab countries and reaches the conclusion that these countries can not stand neutral toward the present international situation. He therefore says in part:

"It will appear from the foregoing that the Arab states can not, in their present form, agree to the Russian demand, namely, to assume neutrality. But they can agree to the Western demand, namely, co-operation with the West.

"This co-operation must not be cheap. But it must have a price. We do not ask ~~the~~ price as a favor or bargain. We ask for it as lost rights usurped by the West or the usurpation of which the West encouraged. He who asks for his rights does not bargain...

"The Arab states have specific demands in the Egyptian question, the Palestine question, the Iraqi question, the Jordanian question and the oil questions all of which are connected with the Western powers. So long as the Arab states can agree only on co-operation with the West, the Political Committee should better adopt the following procedure:

"Firstly - Unifying the Arab front toward the West through agreement on the minimum demands pertaining to each Arab country. These demands must be submitted jointly so that the demand of each Arab state would be the demand of all of them.

Secondly - Negotiating with the West over these demands on the basis of the principle of supply and demand but within the framework of the common interests.

"Thirdly, Obtaining practical safeguards in relation to the safety of the Arab states regarding the ambitions surrounding them.

Fourthly - Obtaining equality in the common benefits."

AL-HAYAT'S Political Correspondent writes: "Arab circles in Beirut are showing interest in information received from Washington to the effect that the US will wage a campaign for bringing pressure to bear upon the Arab countries in order to make direct peace with Israel."

"This information states that America expressed this

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desire to a number of the heads of the Arab delegates during the UN session but nothing official has been made in this respect. The information concludes that the recent international developments will move America to ask the Arab states to conclude peace with Israel. With regard to official sources at the Foreign Office they state that they do not know anything about such an American campaign."

AL-'AMAL (Maronite, opposition, organ of the Lebanese Phalange Party)

criticizes the Lebanese government because of its ill-treatment of the press. In another editorial the paper advises the Arab League states not to involve themselves in military alliances before organizing their own economic affairs. The paper wishes Lebanon to assume a neutral position toward the present international conflict.

In reporting the courtesy visit the President of the Republic and the Prime Minister paid Friday last to the Maronite Patriarch in Bkerki, AL-'AMAL says that it understands from a "highly informed source" that the President and the Patriarch discussed privately a number of important issues, including that of Lebanon's position on the present international situation. According to this source, the Patriarch pointed out the firm friendship existing between Lebanon and some of the powers and the necessity of morally supporting these powers. But he demanded that Lebanon observe complete neutrality because its potentialities are little in proportion to those of the other powers....

AL-HADAF (Editor: Suhair Usairan, Shia-Muslim, pro-government)

hopes that the Arab delegates to the Arab League Political Committee will deeply appreciate the gravity of the international situation and will act according to the vital interests of their countries. It says in part:

"We have seen how our delegates to UN have recently defied the American demand for regarding Communist China as an aggressor and how they have submitted with the Asiatic powers a proposal for mediation and peace. We therefore hope to see the Political Committee handling the situation in the same spirit; and the like success gesture as an indication of local harmony and orientation regarding our position toward the two camps. We must endeavor to serve world peace as much as we can. If this should be impossible and if the warmongers insist on drowning the world in blood for a third time, then our road is neutrality - neutrality which imposes itself on all and which is respected by all. We are able to do this if our determination is sound and our intentions are sincere."

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ASH-SHARQ (Editor: Khairi Ka'ki, Sunni-Muslim, Arab nationalist)

describes the horrors and the destruction which a third world war will inflict on mankind and says that the whole world yearns for peace and security. "We therefore urge the rulers who are responsible for the destiny of the Arab nation not to stand on the side of the devil. The devil here means the war which will be averted only by the sincere desire for peace of every honorable person in the world.. so that enough forces would be united and mustered to stop the tyrants and the blood suckers and to save humanity from disintegration and annihilation."